THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Freight Containers of Balmer Lawrie & Co. Limited are primarily exported. However, there is scope for Railways, CONCOR, Defence, Shipping Corporation of India etc., to buy this product from Balmer Lawrie & Co. Limited, apart from its use in intermodal Road transportation in the Private Sector.

(c) and (d) Balmer Lawrie has taken up its problems and demands with concerned Ministries/Agencies. This Ministry has extended necessary support to Balmer Lawrie in tackling its problems.

New Exploration Licensing Policy

2755. SHRI S. M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether bids have been invited under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP); if so, the salient features of bid evaluation criteria fixed for the purpose; and

(b) what have been the response to the bid?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Waiting List of LPG Connections

2756. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of persons district-wise in all State and Union Territories waiting for LPG connections as on 15th December, 1998;

(b) whether Government propose to take some measures ensuring release of LPG connections to consumers on demand against normal terms of payment;

(c) whether Government propose to reduce the charges to get LPG connections under 'Tatkal Schemes' to clear the heavy waiting position for LPG connections;

(d) whether the steps as in (c) will save the consumers from exploitation being creating by vested people; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) The toal number of persons in all States and Union Territories waiting for LPG connections as on 1.10.98 was about 137.5 lakhs. New LPG connections are released in a phased manner throughout the country depending upon the LPG availability, waiting list, slack available with the distributors and their viability. The Government has approved release of 35 lakhs new LPG connections in the country by PSU Oil Cos. during 1998-99. Plans have been drawn to enrol additional new LPG customers in the future years in the country by augmenting LPG availability.

(c) No, Sir. The Non refundable lumpsum amount was reduced from Rs. 5000/- to Rs. 4000/- only some time black.

(d) and (e) The target for releases under Tatkal Scheme is 10% of annual enrolment target. This scheme only helps those needy persons wanting to avail LPG connection without any waiting.

Commission of RPO Dealers

2757. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to Unstarred Question 4094, answered on 23rd July, 1998 and state:

(a) what is the break up of RPO dealers commission on Sales of MS and HSD;

(b) whether the present dealers commission on above products is sufficient to cover evaporation loss, wages and salaries, LFR, Electricity Bills, Maintenance of Toilet, Air Facilities, Telegram facilities and shrinkage loss and other administrative expenses; and

(c) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) The Government had, based on the recommendations of the Directors' Committee, revised the dealers' commission on MS/HSD on 6.11.97. Thereafter based on the escalation formula for compensating the change in All-India Consumer Price index the oil companies again increased the Dealers' Commission for MS/HSD effective 1.4.1998. The current Dealers' Commission is as given below:—

Products	Rs./KL
MS—87	411
MS—93	448
HSD—Slab I	223
Slab II	169

Dealers paying by demand drafts to get an additional Rs. 40/KL for MS and Rs. 16/KL for HSD towards bank charges. Dealers' Commission takes into account the following elements:

(i) Return on investment;

(ii) Operating costs which includes expenses like salary and wages, electricity, insurance, repair and maintenance, telephone, uniforms, conveyance, depreciation, taxes/fees/audit, rent, printing and stationery, consumables, and shrinkage allowance where applicable.

(iii) Cost of working capital and Stock loss.

Employment of Graduate Engineers by ONGC in Assam

2758. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of graduate engineers employed by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in the State of Assam at present; and

(b) the details of Assamese graduate engineers working in ONGC in Assam and also from outside the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) There are 665 graduate engineers employed by ONGC in the State of Assam as on date. Of these 164 are Assamese graduate engineers. Remaining 501 graduate engineers are from outside the State of Assam.

Allotment of Gas Agencies and Petrol Pumps in Assam

2759. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons who have been allotted gas agencies and petrol pumps in the State of Assam, during the last five years;

(b) the details thereof district-wise;

(c) whether Government have formulated any comprehensive scheme to grant gas agencies and petrol pumps to the persons widow women who affected by terrorists in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?